

**Long Term Care Coordinating Council**

**December 12th, 2007**

**State House Room 313**

**Providence, RI**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Attendance:**

**Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts**

**Senator June Gibbs**

**Ray Rusin**

**Alan Tavares**

**Donna Rodrigues**

**Bonnie Larson**

**Daniel Hatch**

**Bonnie Sekeres**

**Maria Barros**

**Al Santos**

**Maureen Maigret**

**Paola Fonseca**

**Jessica Buhler**

**Paula Parker**

**Roberta Merkle**

**David Dosa**

**Richard Freeman**

**Elaina Goldstein**

**Holly Garvey**  
**Kathleen Kelly**  
**Karen Amado**  
**Joan Kwaitkowski**  
**Gavin Ward**  
**Susan Saccoccia-Olson**  
**Jim Flanagan**  
**Sr. Marietta Walsh**  
**MaryAnn Altrui**  
**Anna Goldman**  
**Kathleen Heren**  
**Cynthia Conant-Arp**  
**Jennifer Wood**  
**Dan Meuse**  
**Brian Monteiro**

**The December meeting of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council was called to order by Chairwoman Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts at 10:05 a.m.**

**The minutes of the November meeting were approved unanimously.**

**Chairwoman Roberts called on Ray Rusin from the Department of Health to report on the surveying activities of the office of facilities**

regulation. Mr. Rusin reported that there were 8 annual surveys conducted that resulted in deficiencies, but that no actual harm deficiencies were cited. The department took no enforcement actions but there will be follow up surveys on the deficiencies found.

Chairwoman Roberts called on Jennifer Wood to speak about the Pressure Ulcer Initiative being undertaken by the office of Lt. Governor, Quality Partners and the Department of Health. Ms. Wood introduced Anna Goldman, a Brown University graduate student who is working with the office of Lt. Governor to coordinate the activities surrounding pressure ulcers. Ms. Wood stated that the office of Lt. Governor is currently gathering information as to how other states have proceeded with similar groups, and that the workgroup would start meeting in January. Ray Rusin from the Department of Health stated that the LANE Exchange run through Quality Partners will be a good place to get stakeholders together. Maria Barros shared with the group some articles on pressure ulcer prevention.

Chairwoman Roberts called on Senator June Gibbs to report on the activities of the legislative committee. Senator Gibbs reported that the legislative committee met on December 7. Discussion at the meeting focused on the need for a change in the way discharge planning works to allow for easier transition to home and community based care as is appropriate for the patient. The discussion highlighted the importance of an information tool that could be used by discharge planners and consumers. Senator Gibbs said that as legislation is

introduced, the committee will examine it and make recommendations to the council.

Chairwoman Roberts introduced Elaina Goldstein to discuss home modification grants and the work of Rhodes to Independence. Ms. Goldstein states that she is working on a guidebook for home modifications with assistance from a student in URI Physical Therapy graduate program, Dan Hatch. Mr. Hatch states that his idea for the study came about while he was doing work at Ocean State Center for Independent Living last year and had an opportunity to see firsthand the difficulties inherent in accessing the current home modification program.

Mr. Hatch stated that the first recommended change to the home modification program would be a common checklist for physical or occupational therapists to use when assessing a home for a patient being discharged from a medical care setting. The checklist is also a useful tool for people to consider while in good health, since most people want to stay in their homes as long as possible. He also states that the common checklist can be implemented at very minimal cost.

Senator Gibbs suggested that home modification information should tie in with discharge planning.

Chairwoman Roberts asked, once the home assessment has been done what comes next? Ms. Goldstein stated that the problem is that

**we have two different worlds that do not necessarily coordinate - medical and architectural. We have to make sure that the physical therapists and others who do home assessments and architects and contractors who will actually make modifications will work together. Many modifications are made without an architect and this results in problems with accessing appropriate loans, grants or reimbursement for the modification.**

**Dr. Dosa stated that the resource handbook about home modification financing is a very good idea, but that the home modification challenges do not just relate to availability of financing. People need to be able to find contractors who are capable of doing the job correctly and professionally.**

**Chairwoman Roberts asked if there has been a discussion that centralizes access through one location? Mr. Hatch stated that there has not been a coordinated approach in the past, but that this would be clearly be a helpful direction to chart in the future. The resource handbook is a first step toward a more coordinated approach.**

**Chairwoman Roberts thanked Ms. Goldstein and Mr. Hatch for their presentation.**

**Chairwoman Roberts asked the council members to spend some time considering whether there are issues that they would like to place on the agenda of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council, beyond**

those that are currently pending, for upcoming year and to bring forward that input at the January meeting.

Maureen Maigret stated that there are proposed changes to the Department of Elderly Affairs co-pay program that would increase the amounts of the co-pay for participants in the home care and adult day program. In addition, the regulations would not allow the money spent on home care to be deducted from the total income for the purpose of determining program eligibility. Maria Barros stated that she has a lot of clients in co-pay services and that they are struggling to pay the monthly fee and if they have to pay more, they will have to cut back on the services they receive. The result of this change may often be that patients will be forced to spend down their resources and enter a nursing facility.

Ms. Maigret moved as follows: That the Long Term Care Coordinating Counsel oppose the extent of the increases in the co-pay program as these co-pay increases shift the burden to patients and make it more difficult for elders to continue live in their own homes." The motion was seconded. Discussion was held that the LTCCC supports the efforts of family caregivers and elders and thus must oppose co-pay increases. Further discussion was held highlighting the fact that these co-pay increases would represent a step backward in the transformation toward supporting more in-home and community based services. The motion was passed unanimously and the Lt. Governor indicated that the Council's

position would be communicated to DEA, the Secretary and the Governor.

Paula Parker stated that after the public hearing on the proposed co-pay regulations, the proposal to remove the spending allowance on home care for the purpose of program eligibility has been removed. This amendment was made in light of the public testimony opposing the disallowance of home care expenses. She stated that the overall co-pay increase proposal had become necessary because of the budget and that there had been no increase in the co-pay levels in 6 years.

Chairwoman Roberts stated that the state must think more creatively in using its funding. The decisions made based on the current budget circumstances will have a lasting effect on the programs and systems people rely on and it is always important to take the long view when facing budgetary shortfalls.

Dr. Dosa brought forward another issue, stating that one of big challenges facing hospitals is the rise of drug resistant organisms and the problems that they cause in nursing homes, hospitals and in the transition process from a hospital to a nursing home. Dr. Dosa stated that there is a need for education on the issue and for uniformity of procedures for dealing with these organisms. Chairwoman Roberts suggested the council dedicate a meeting to the issue of infectious disease and these protocols in the coming

months.

Joan Kwaitkowski brought up the work of the Perry/Sullivan workgroups. She stated that she wanted to ensure that there is close relationship between the Perry/Sullivan workgroups and the council. Currently, the finance workgroup is working on a plan for public reporting of costs. She also stated that the workgroups have committed to working on educational outreach to consumers in the next year.

Elaina Goldstein stated that she would also emphasize the focus of the council being inclusive of the disability community as well as the senior community.

Chairwoman Roberts asked the council for new business.

Al Santos informed the council that his successor has been named and that as of January 1 Virginia Burke would be the new president of RIHCA.

The Lieutenant Governor took this opportunity to recognize Mr. Santos for his many years of dedicated service to Rhode Islanders and active contributions to the Council.

Jessica Buhler stated that Senior Agenda and the United Way are sponsoring a policy forum to present information from the Senior



**Agenda Factbook which may assist the council in its deliberations.**

**The policy forum is January 17, 2008 at Save the Bay.**

**Adjourned 11:30 A.M.**